

AUSTRALIA NEEDS A TWO-TIER SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE

Developed by Robert S Buick 30 May 2017 with updates 19 January 2019

IN THE BEGINNING

Until 1901 there were only colonies with governors administered from London this changed on the First of January 1901 to six states and territories offshore and on the mainland. Now each state with its Constitution, governed by an elected parliament and appointed Governor, with a national government overarching all states and territories with an elected parliament and an appointed Governor-General. Local governments are elected with responsibilities legislated by the state government.

One Hundred and Nineteen years on, at the date of writing this paper, this is how Australia is still governed. One wonders if there must be changes because the only common denominator between then and now regarding powers, duties and responsibilities is that those people in control, the political parties and bureaucrats do not want any change as they are all very comfortable as elected representatives or in employment as bureaucrats controlling the elected representatives.

1901 -2017

With Australia's estimated population at Federation of some 3,800,000, all the states developed individually according to their wants and needs and that principle remains today. Although in the latter half of the twentieth centuries, post-1970, the national government has increasingly overseen state development because it has the fiscal influences and by linking expenditure to nominated projects and administration. Examples include education, designated national transport infrastructure and social benefits.

So, in the past four decades, the governance between the states and national governments is seen from the outside to be toxic to many for many reasons, state egos and political ideologies are at the forefront.

The difficulty of planning and creating any change is through powers deemed by the seven constitutions. It is as if we have eight colonies in 2019 with a centralist government cracking the biggest whip.

Australia is the only continent with under one flag and nine governments, all opting to do their own thing. My crystal ball sees no change for the better without political support and quality alternative to replace what we have.

Until we have one national government with regional governments to administer legislation by one government can be done based on the present numbers in the national parliament that are One Hundred and Fifty Members in the House of Representatives and Seventy Six Senators.

HOW TO DEVELOP A NEW SYSTEM TO GOVERN

Population projections predict Australia's population in 2025 to be about 28,000,000 that is only about 3,000,000 more than today in 2019. The estimated is flexible with the happenings during the past few years.

We are familiar to how the Australian Electoral Office (AEC) determines electoral boundaries, and we know we have 12 senators for each state and 2 per each territory a total of 76. My proposal for the composition of parliament is that the House of Representative (HR) retains 76 and the Senate numbers change to 1 Senator to 2 elected members of the HR, a ratio of 1:2.

The secret is how to create and implement such an arrangement. I do not have the skill, nor that ability to drill down to develop this and would expect either the AEC develops a model by a tertiary student or Department Head does a thesis on this outline.

The end game is to retain the parliamentary numbers except for one senator, a ratio of 1:2, 75 senators and 150 MPs.

I suggest that with the removal of state and state boundaries and these be replaced with two tiers of government. The end is with, a national and a number regional or provincial government. Attaining this can be done using the present AEC electoral divisions so that two divisions have one senator to two members. With a local government based on a cluster of four, six, or eight electoral divisions.

Ideally, each regional/provincial government needs to be a self-sufficient identity and be capable of sustainable fiscal collection and GST. The difficulty in this is Australia's demography with eighty-five per cent of the population living within a couple of hundred kilometres of the coastline.

However, the AEC should be able to develop regional governments using the present electoral division, and with an exclusive geographical zone governed by the Federal government encompassing "The OUTBACK". That region of Australia without the demographic capability of self-sustainability and comprising the majority of the Indigenous peoples of Australia. Maybe to help finance this exclusive regional government zone the others regions a levied a proportion of GST.

HOW THIS WORKS

There is one Constitution, and this will include separation of powers, responsibilities and duties. For the National and Regional Governments, a document with duties and responsibilities embedded for each, the national government and regional government.

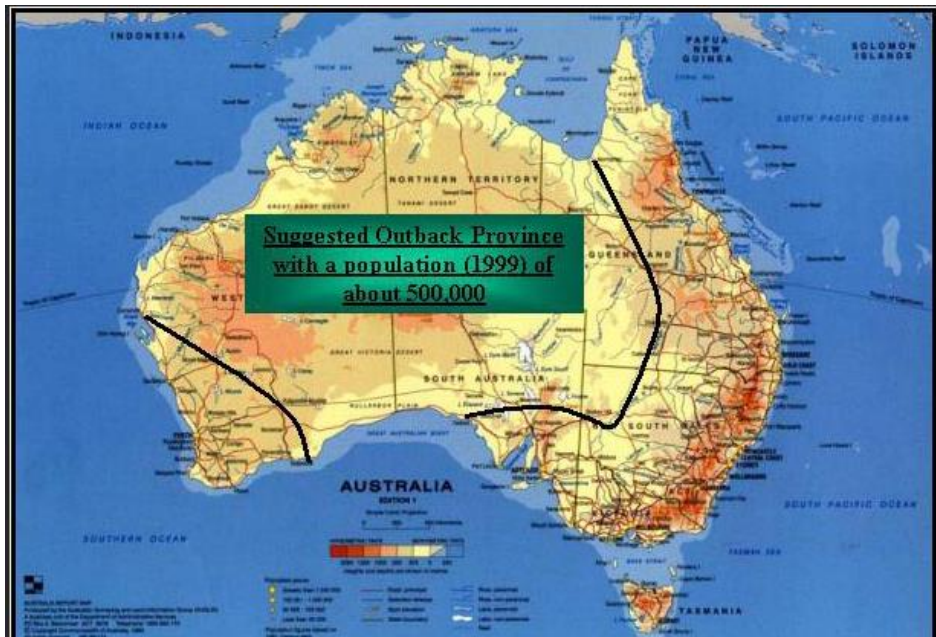
Those deemed to be of national importance become the responsibility of the federal government, the rest the regional/provincial governments.

Each region will create an administrative centre, this to house both Federal departmental offices and Regional or provincial government.

INDIGENOUS FUTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Australia with its colonial past needs change to the satisfaction of the majority of Australians. The problem being with the present state and national administrative systems, due to the state and

federal the history, different systems and most of all the change and loss of political party powers controlling the nation and states.



In the paragraph above I mention the vast central Australia region, “THE OUTBACK”, An exclusive geographical zone governed by the Federal government encompassing “The OUTBACK”, that region of Australia without the demographic capable of self-sustainability and comprising the majority of the Indigenous peoples of Australia. Maybe to help finance this exclusive regional government zone the others regions a levied a proportion of GST. Encompasses all the mainland Aboriginal communities and the federal government is empowered under the 1967 Referendum Amendment to the Constitution could over time satisfy all interested sections of interest.



FEDERAL AGENCIES APPLICABLE TO PROVINCES

Creating government's as outlined above with administrative centres providing support would have federal agencies included applicable to the needs of that region.

Law and Judicial agencies responsibilities would be determined and defined in the Constitution which is administered by either the federal or provisional government and common to all regions. There are other agencies, like Border Protection would have agencies in selected regions as would agricultural and mining.

CONCLUSION

I present this as a discussion paper. There needs to be political academia to encourage post-graduates in politics to write a thesis thereby promoting a system for change. I do not profess I have the answer, but I believe I have planted a seed, and that needs to be cultivated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Buick', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

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